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A Cumulative Record For Catholic Elementary Schools

M. Patricia Cosgrove
Loyola University Chicago

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A CUMULATIVE RECORD FOR CATHOLIC
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

By

Sister M. Patricia, S. S. N. D.

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the Requirements for the Degree of Master
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VITA

Sister Mary Patricia Cosgrove was born in Millville, Minnesota, November 26, 1906.

She received her elementary education at the public school there, and her secondary education at St. Felix High School, Wabasha, Minnesota.

In 1940, she received the degree, Bachelor of Arts, from Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Two years later she entered Loyola University and registered as a graduate student in the Department of Education.

All her teaching experience, in both the elementary and the secondary schools, has been in the state of Minnesota. She taught in St. Andrew School, St. Paul, from 1929 to 1944, and in St. Agnes High School, St. Paul, from 1944 to the present time.

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CUMULATIVE
RECORD FORM FOR CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

Catholic educators have always been cognizant of the fact that education has a far more vital function than the mere teaching of facts. To Catholics, education has always meant growth, the development of character. Since the primary aim of Catholic schools is to train the child in such a way that he will later be able to direct himself toward the salvation of his immortal soul, guidance of the individual child during his formative years has been our great concern. In recent years more serious efforts have been made to determine the best methods by which adequate moral and educational guidance could be given. Both administrators and educators alike now recognize the value of the cumulative record as an effective guidance tool.

The cumulative record provides an instrument by which teachers can gain a deeper understanding of the child and thus guide his moral and educational development before serious problems occur. As the most satisfactory record for any system is based on the specific needs of the school, it is evident that the items on our cumulative records should be consistent with the objectives of Catholic education, since the value of such a record lies in the manner it contributes to the outcomes of the school.

There have been a number of studies of the record forms used in public schools (22, 42, 43); but so far as the author has been able to ascertain, no research has been reported which was directed toward developing a record form especially appropriate for use in Catholic schools. The author undertook, therefore (1) to analyze the record forms in use in two hundred representative schools well distributed geographically, (2) to develop a new record form on the basis of the frequency with which items occurred in the record forms studied, and (3) to revise the new record form in the light of criticisms offered by Catholic principals.

The common theories and general principles which justify the keeping of pupils' records in any school are discussed in Chapter I. Special emphasis is placed on the manner in which these same principles apply to our Catholic schools. Chapter II contains an analysis of two hundred records received from schools located in forty-five states. These forms are representative of the types used in small schools in rural districts as well as those adopted by large schools in metropolitan areas. A study of the cumulative record forms now in use in several archdioceses and dioceses is also included in this analysis.

The items occurring 50 per cent or more times in the records studied are listed in Chapter III. Added to the list are six items noted frequently in the records of Catholic schools which would seem to prove especially helpful in the guidance of Catholic children.

Chapter IV deals with the reactions and suggestions of 106 Catholic elementary-school principals. Since writers say that one criteria for the selection of items is the demand for certain types of information, the principals were requested to check the list of items in order to determine, in the light of their experience, just which items are most frequently used by different agencies seeking information about their students. The completed record in two forms is presented in Chapter V. The simple 5" x 8" card contains the revised list of items, while the 5" x 8" folder has, in addition, a more complete health and personality record.

The construction of any record form must necessarily be considered a continuous process, keeping pace with changes in educational emphasis. The emphasis, at this time, seems to be on the development of character and personality. The present study, as completed, represents an attempt to adapt the criteria of an effective record system to the particular needs of our Catholic elementary schools.

CHAPTER I

THE THEORY AND PRINCIPLES OF RECORD KEEPING

A cumulative record is a form on which a school collects and records in a systematic manner all the items it considers valuable about an individual student. It represents the institution's best efforts to give a complete picture of each pupil by supplying the information needed to understand a child's particular needs or difficulties. At the same time, it is the school's account of its attempts to discover and use to the child's best advantage his special abilities and interests.

The modern cumulative record has two distinctive features which distinguish it from the older form of permanent record: the former contains data pertaining to the pupil's personal and family history, an accumulation of test scores in various subjects, and an evaluation of the child's personality; while the latter consisted chiefly of a record of subjects and marks together with a minimum of items regarding the child's personal history. In the newer type of record the school shows that it recognizes the fact that pupils are developing in various ways, and so does not place all the emphasis on scholastic achievement.

The best evidences of the widening basis of evaluation can be found in the types of materials that are increasing finding their way into school's cumulative records. No longer do cumulative records in good schools show only a collection of marking symbols representing estimates of achievement in subjects. To these have been added not

only mental measurements in the form of standardized test scores, but also health indexes, personal ratings, and records indicative of general student activities.¹

Although it may be contended that the school is chiefly responsible for the intellectual development of children, it is a well-known fact that all types of growth are interrelated. Undesirable personality traits or unwholesome emotional development can block every other type of growth. Therefore it is only the record which contains all the significant developments occurring during a child's school days that is perfectly satisfactory. "If the educational process is to be regarded as not merely the accomplishment in subject matter fields, but the achievement as well of attitudes, interests, and other more generalized modes of responses, the pupil's school history must be more all-inclusive than the usual permanent record card."²

Writers in the field of educational research are constantly trying to discover just which items should be included in the best type of cumulative record. They agree that the first criterion is the usability of the record; that is, it must contain the information necessary for the administration, the teachers, the pupil, and his parents. "The use made of good records is the criterion of their

¹ Educational Policies Commission. "Learning the Ways of Democracy." National Education Association Bulletin, 383.

² Orleans, Jacob S. "Measurement in Education." Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York, 1937, 380.

value. . . . The effective use of records is the result of deliberate planning and the inauguration of procedures for the utilization of recorded information."³

If each proposed item for the record is subjected to the question, "What contribution will this item make toward the diagnosis of the child's interests, capacities, aptitudes, limitations, and vocational possibilities?"⁴ as Ruch and Segel suggest, then there will be no danger that the record will become crowded with a multitude of unrelated items. It is understood, of course, that not all items have the same value during the entire school life of the child. For example, while the pupil's attention is centered on learning the fundamentals of reading and arithmetic, the school is more interested in the results of tests, for they are indicative of the progress being made in that area; as the child matures, his interests, out-of-school activities, and growth in personality assume the major role of importance in his record. However, the record to be satisfactory must contain all the items needed by administrators, teachers, pupils, and parents. The various purposes for which each group requires information will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

It is becoming less common today to find a school in which the administrators do not give cognizance to the value of a cumulative

³ Rodgers, Elizabeth G. "Using Pupil Records in Physical Education." Vol. 17, No. 4, 218.

⁴ Ruch, G. M. Segel, D. "Minimum Essentials of the Individual Inventory in Guidance." U.S. Dept. of the Interior. 1939 Monograph.

record. They realize the truth of the statement made by Elliot of Purdue University that the "caliber of a school can be judged by the excellence of its records."⁵ No longer does the criticism of Rinsland apply to our modern elementary schedule:

Of all the production plants the writer has seen, an educational plant has the poorest and most meager system of bookkeeping especially for the fundamental and important thing the plant produces, human learning.⁶

On the contrary, administrators use their records for varied but specific purposes which may be outlined as follows:

1. To reflect the objectives of their school.
2. To aid in the adjustment of pupils.
3. To assist the teachers in their guidance work.
4. To provide teacher-education in the use of records.

In accord with these functions, administrators before adopting or constructing a cumulative record study carefully the specific aims of their school and the objectives toward which they hope teachers will help pupils progress. Although the broad, general purpose of education--training the entire child for a full life--remains constant, Catholic education looking beyond to a higher purpose--happiness in the next life--aims to reflect and stress these objectives.

It is for this reason particularly that records of Catholic schools should be decidedly different. Since they hold a different

⁵ Walters, J. E. "Individualizing Education by Means of Applied Procedures." John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1935, 197.

⁶ Rinsland, Henry D. "Constructing Tests and Grading." Prentice-Hall Inc., New York, 1937, 260.

philosophy than that held by public educators, their aims of education do not entirely coincide. "Because we believe that there are certain permanent moral values, the attitudes we wish to inculcate necessarily reflect those different standards of evaluation."⁷ Instead of including only the objectives of secular education, that is, preparing the pupil for worthy citizenship and a successful economic life, "Catholic education adds the concept of the development of the spiritual faculties of the soul and the training of character for virtue here and for happiness hereafter."⁸ The record items dealing with character or personality traits will point out this divergence of emphasis to some extent, but it is, even at the present time, considered rather difficult to test and record with certainty the development of right attitudes.

The second purpose for which administrators find the use of records effective, as an aid in the adjustment of the school, the curriculum, and the daily schedule to the benefit of every child, is best illustrated through the guidance programs which many schools have inaugurated. In fact, the main emphasis has been on the value of records for guidance purposes. Since it is in guidance work that the worth of a complete record is recognized, another section of this chapter will be devoted to that subject.

⁷ Fleege, Bro. Urban M. "How Successfully Are We Developing Right Attitudes?" Cath. Ed. Review, Vol. 37, April, 1939, 236.

⁸ Vincent, Bro. D. "Personality and Mental Hygiene." Catholic School Journal, Vol. 44, No. 9, November, 1944, 245.

As teachers begin to realize the great amount of good accruing to each child from individual guidance, they do far more of this work than is actually required. Through a study of each pupil's record the teacher becomes keenly alert to the child's problems and more eager to assist the administrators in the improvement of instruction. "As an administrative device, the cumulative record allows the teacher and supervisor to note academic progress from an objective point of view and to note trends of individual weaknesses or defects in the factual knowledge equipment of the child." ⁹

This careful appraisal of their records is one of the finest means of teacher-education. As teachers begin to see the record's relation to the school's program of personnel service and guidance, they no longer consider the keeping of records an additional burden, but regard it as a most helpful educational device. Then, too, "improvements in the pupil records of a school will come most rapidly when the teaching staff participates in the study and planning that is continuously needed." ¹⁰ To facilitate this program of teacher-education Hahn suggests a staff clinic with the following objectives:

1. The staff clinic can be used as an administrative tool for the instruction of homeroom and classroom teachers.

⁹ Wrightstone, J. Wayne, "A Cumulative School Record and Pupil Analysis." Bulletin of the Dept. of Elementary School Principles, April, 1930, 483.

¹⁰ Allen, Wendell C., "Suggested Improvements of Pupil Records." Journal of Secondary Education, Vol. 11, April, 1944, 17.

2. It can clarify faculty thinking with regard to common types of problems which face individual pupils.
3. It is an aid to uniform analysis and diagnosis of case data.
4. It should call attention to the lack of school facilities for meeting unusual problems. 11

Since the principal is the individual who has an overview of all the educational factors in the school, it follows that he should make himself the best-equipped faculty member in the elementary school, for it is there that much pupil personnel work must be done. If he is also the supervisor, he will find in the cumulative record a rather complete analysis of each child's abilities. All this information is necessary for adequate and effective supervision. He will use the knowledge gained from a study of the card to make his plans for more individualized instruction. Perhaps there is no better method of demonstrating the value of a cumulative record than the splendid results that are soon apparent from the more direct teacher-pupil contacts which occur in that learning situation.

Before concluding the discussion of the place of records in administration, the opinion of several authorities regarding the criteria for the choice of items may be valuable.

1. The frequency with which items are needed to make state form reports.

11 Hahn, Milton. "The Staff Clinic in the Pupil Personnel Program." The School Review, Vol. 47, January, 1939, 32.

2. The frequency with which they are needed to solve important problems in school administration.
3. The frequency with which items are actually used by schoolmen. ¹²
4. All items essential to the administration of teaching. ¹³
5. In adopting a record system the administration must consider if it will fit the situation where it will be used. The factors to consider are:
 - (a) Has provision been made for the collection of data at regular intervals?
 - (b) Is it kept with the pupil throughout his school life?
 - (c) The record should be developed and used cooperatively and confidentially.
 - (d) The recorded data should be as valid as possible. ¹⁴

The second and perhaps the most important use of the cumulative record is its function as a guidance tool in the hands of a competent teacher. Educational writers seem to be unanimous in regarding this form as the "sine qua non" of guidance. The efficient teacher sincerely interested in a new group will, before the opening of the term, study their cumulative records to acquire some information about the pupils for whom he is to become responsible. Although this

¹² Heck, Arch. O. "Administration of Pupil Personnel." Ginn and Co., Boston, 1929, 253.

¹³ Moehlman quoted in Reinoehl, C. M. and Ayer, F. C., "Classroom Administration and Pupil Adjustment." D. Appleton-Century Co., New York, 1940, 305.

¹⁴ Rhodes, Alvin E., "The California Cumulative Guidance Record for Elementary Schools." Educational Leadership, Vol. 11, No. 7, April, 1945, 301.

may be but a brief survey, he can discover which pupils have good attendance records, which have been retarded because of illness, and which children have good scholastic records. If character traits have been rated, they will also prove an invaluable help.

Experience has proved that the progress of each pupil with new teachers depends almost entirely upon how well the teacher knows him. If each teacher has some ways of knowing at the beginning of the year the particular strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils who come to him, he could adjust himself to their needs with a saving of much time and repetition. 15

This study of previous records presupposes an absorbing interest on the part of the teacher in each individual child rather than in the class as a whole. The master teacher is one who is deeply concerned about the optimum development of each child's potentialities, because he realizes that to be effective his teaching must give attention to the many-sided aspects of their personalities. "The teacher in the elementary grades must realize they have children who are bundles of varied and great possibilities. These children are individuals who have talents, capacities, and abilities as well as needs and problems." 16 It is true that not every teacher is equally skilled in sensing the significant experiences in a pupil's record, for it

15 Duncan, R. H. "Modern Schools Need Accumulative Records." Virginia Journal of Education, Vol. 31, January, 1938, 178.

16 Addy, M. L. "Importance of Guidance in Elementary Schools." Educational Administration and Supervision, Vol. 30, May, 1944, 302.

does take a bit of psychological insight to read between the lines. However, this technique of guidance is usually taught to beginners, since it is understood that the validity of the information they record is directly related to the teacher's ability to observe and evaluate a child's behavior. Through practice this power can be augmented if the instructor has both sympathy with a child's nature and the realization that, since children differ both in background and temperament, they must be treated differently. "From the teacher it demands maturity, social adjustment, good mental health, and an understanding of child and adolescent psychology." ¹⁷ His efforts to acquire this breadth of understanding will be amply rewarded when he sees the results. Even a very young child seems to sense that by keeping a record of his progress his teacher is manifesting a sincere interest and confidence in his ability to improve. "No one who has seen his interest help young people with their problems and plans fails to be both fascinated by and proud of his guidance." ¹⁸ This guidance may be divided into three types: educational, health, and social guidance.

It was in the field of educational guidance that the value of a cumulative record was first perceived. The teacher learned by studying pupils' records just where to place the greatest emphasis in his

¹⁷ Gordon, Hans C. "Pupil Personnel Records and Reports." Review of Educational Research, Vol. XII, February, 1942, 534.

¹⁸ Becker, "Making a Guidance Program Function." School Executive, February, 1941, 16.

teaching and which pupils needed his special help with individual problems. Keeping in mind his great objective, to secure the best possible development of each child, he tries to discover special abilities and capacities, as well as weaknesses and difficulties, and teaches accordingly.

If the cumulative record is to serve its purpose, the teacher must learn that part of his responsibility is to know his pupils. In other words, the teacher must learn to examine the cumulative record often, to make a habit of such examination as the planning of lesson content is made a habit. Adequate use of cumulative records may imply a change in professional emphasis on the part of many teachers. 19

Since the interested teacher is concerned with every phase of a pupil's development, his guidance will also include regard for the child's health. When educators began to see the close relation between good health and scholastic success, they initiated a definite health program in all schools. Soon this shift in emphasis was reflected in the record system. "The administrative purpose of the cumulative data of every child is that the health of the child may be given due attention and guidance. . . . Both teacher and supervisor need health data at hand for immediate reference in maladjustment." 20 The alert teacher especially is quick to recognize physical disabilities and reports them to the doctor or school nurse at once. Excessive nervousness, scowling, and tics are but a few symptoms which, while

19 Orleans, Jacob S. Op. cit., 380.

20 Wrightstone, J. W. Op. cit., 484.

easily observable, may be indicative of serious health problems.

Such conditions as glandular malfunctioning, low basal metabolism, uncorrected vision, and malnutrition should be given as careful attention as the more common matters of heart, lungs, and dental conditions. In fact, the former often have a much closer relation to classroom behavior than the latter do. ²¹

It is often in the study of health data that the teacher finds the solution of both educational and behavior problems. When a child begins to behave very differently in different situations, the teacher endeavors to discover and remedy the real causes. If a study of health data reveals no solution, his attention is next directed toward a study of the child's personality.

It is in the study of personality development that the cumulative record has more recently proved its effectiveness. In the past it was only in the case of the problem child that teachers searched, and often in vain, for helpful information. It was the child who was most often in trouble that obtained the greater part of a teacher's attention. Now every teacher realizes why "The greatest challenge before us as educators is to develop personality and character first." ²² Desirable social traits are usually indications of a well-balanced personality. Consequently, a study centered around the manner in

²¹ Eurich and Wrenn, "Appraisal of Student Characteristics and Needs," 37th Yearbook, Guidance in Educational Institutions, Part I, Chapter 2, 42.

²² Davies, W. R. "Charting Pupil Progress." Nations Schools, XXIV August, 1939, 30.

which a child adjusts himself to a group often reveals such valuable information. Although no single rating is valid in this regard any more than is the I. Q. in the prediction of scholastic success, an accumulation of character and personality ratings over a period of years by a number of teachers does give a fairly true picture of a child's personality. In order to achieve this valuable result the elementary teacher begins the work by recording the child's early attempts to acquire self-control and to adjust himself in a group situation. He also notes any deviation from normal behavior which may be regarded as early signs of maladjustment. "Social and personality adjustment problems are often more complex and more difficult to meet with adequate knowledge of the causes leading to maladjustment," ²³ if the study is not begun early enough in the child's career. "How much were these conditions present, at least in embryonic form, during school days when they might have been removed had notice and interest been taken during those days when the child's nature was so plastic." ²⁴ Were it not for the information he can now obtain from the pupil's cumulative record, the teacher might still be unaware of the early signs of maladjustment in pupils of his own class. "The seed of an adult neurosis was planted in an early maladjustment

²³ Leonard, Eugenie A. "Guidance is Inherent in Education." Catholic Educational Review XXXVIII, December, 1940, 589.

²⁴ Vincent, Brother D. Op. cit., 245.

to life--an adjustment that a little wise guidance or handling at the time might have helped." 25

Catholic teachers in particular are cognizant of the fact that they have a sacred obligation to watch carefully over the early adjustments of children, so that only desirable habits of character may be formed, and right attitudes inculcated. "In our Catholic schools, above all, the development of right attitudes should be one of our prime interests." 26 Definite instruction and sympathetic guidance is given each child in the Catholic school, so that as few problems as possible may arise. The child is urged repeatedly to avail himself of those more effectual helps which his Church offers him.

In Catholic schools we have the most fundamental and important instrument for developing sound wholesome personality in the religious formation and the opportunities we give our students. Scientific and clinical experiences are proving every day that the principles of Catholicism are the backbone of a perfectly adjusted life, the best solution to its many problems. 27

Important as is this knowledge of a child's personality the recording of the data presents various problems. Some teachers prefer recording the score on a standard personality test, while others regard the rating scale of several character traits as both more just

25 Ibid., 246.

26 Fleege, Brother U. Op. Cit., 234.

27 Vincent, Brother D. Op. Cit., 246.

and helpful. A third group considers a running account giving examples of behavior in specific situations to be more enlightening. As a supplement to all three types of study, the anecdotal record has proved very effective. These brief accounts of ways in which the child reveals his outside interests, his plans and ambitions, his ability to lead others, as well as other social traits when summarized on his cumulative record offer valuable suggestions to the next teacher who works with the child. "These are essential to the social life guidance program . . . and no wise teacher ignores such accumulated knowledge but turns it toward useful ends." ²⁸ In concluding the discussion of the teacher's use of the cumulative record for guidance purposes the words of Professor Ruth Strang seem significant:

Records are means of accomplishing the teacher's main task--the best development of every member of his class. . . In so far as the record is based on a sound philosophy of education, it demands of teachers an intelligent and sympathetic study of their pupils. Every teacher has the opportunity to appraise the youth 'and help to unfold for him a happy and successful future.' ²⁹

Certain it is that the child who has been the recipient of the best possible guidance during his elementary-school days should not find the transfer to high school too difficult. It is most desirable that this guidance should be continuous, helping him to effect an

²⁸ Wrightstone, J. W. Op. Cit., 484.

²⁹ Strang, Ruth. "Every Teachers Records." Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1936, 43.

easy transition into high-school life. Formerly when no records whatever preceded or accompanied the pupil, his adjustment to this new situation was made more difficult by the fact that his new teachers knew nothing whatever of his background. "Not a pen scratch precedes or accompanies him as an introduction. He might have come from Mars for all that is known of his previous history." ³⁰ This cannot be said at the present time, however, for now most teachers understand that "the cumulative record is a growing record which follows the child from school entrance through his general educational training and specific vocational preparation, and on to the placement agency and his employer." ³¹

An additional function of the cumulative record is its direct and distinct value to the pupil himself. It serves as an incentive to the child to work to his fullest capacity to achieve success. When he is encouraged to watch the progress he is making, as it is periodically recorded on his form, he is aroused to make much greater efforts toward improvement. Here again is proved the truth of the old proverb, "Nothing succeeds like success." When his achievements do not coincide with his ability, he will more willingly accept the objective evidence before him on his record than the subjective judgment of his teacher. Reinoehl summarizes the value of the cumulative record

³⁰ Cawley, Sister Anne. "Guidance in Catholic Schools." Catholic Educational Review XXXIX, April, 1941, 220.

³¹ Ruch, G. M. and Segel, D. Op. Cit., 27.

to a pupil as follows:

1. To receive fair consideration in his classification.
2. To do his best in making a good record.
3. To make progress in accordance with his ability.
4. To secure the development of his natural capabilities.
5. To secure the transfer of correct information to other schools when desired.
6. To receive proper adjustment and guidance. ³²

Therefore, it is through his record that a pupil begins for the first time to really understand himself. That, of course, is the aim of all real guidance, to assist a child to the extent that he will through a correct understanding of his "assets" and "liabilities" acquire the ability to guide himself toward a successful future.

After presenting the importance of the cumulative record to the administrators, teachers, and to the pupil himself, a final paragraph might be devoted to the answer to this question: "What purpose do these records serve in the school's relationships with parents?" They prove valuable aids in securing that cooperation between home and school which is both desirable and essential at the present time. When parents confer with a teacher about the progress of their child, the information presented on the record helps them get a correct view of the total picture of his development. Teachers, on the other hand, appreciate these conferences as means of obtaining the knowledge

³² Reinoehl, C. M. and Ayer, F. C., Op. Cit., 305.

they need to interpret a child's home situation. "While parents are almost entirely dependent upon the school for information as to their child's development in academic achievement, that is not the only area in which the school should function as a major source of guidance to parents." ³³ From the school the parents hope to learn how the child adjusts himself in a group situation. It is the school that sends the health reports and it is also to the school they look for additional knowledge about their child's character development. To be really helpful to parents in their desire for guidance, the school must have an abundance of objective data on its records. In this regard cumulative records when constructively used become invaluable tools to serve both parents and school in their efforts to help the child. It is scarcely necessary to add that most teachers realize that parents understand their child better than any teacher, even with the aid of a most elaborate record, can ever hope to know him.

However, this danger of over-estimating the value of a record does exist; consequently, it may be advisable to mention a few of the limitations of the cumulative record system. Writers on this subject seem to agree that one of its greatest dangers lies in the fact that a teacher is inclined to attribute to it a completeness or perfection which it cannot possess. This danger has been noted by numerous

³³ National Committee on Cumulative Records. "Handbook of Cumulative Records." United States Office of Education, Bulletin 1944, No. 5, 59.

writers on the subject, among them Eurich and Wrenn, Traxler and Hawkes. The teacher seems to forget at times "that the primary function of a record is to give an interpretive background to a pupil's problems." ³⁴ If the teacher understood that records are meant to be an aid to, and not a substitute for, a thorough knowledge of the child, he would less frequently misuse this information.

The danger resulting from this misuse of record information can scarcely be overemphasized. This accounts for the objection which parents and some teachers make to the use of records. They fear lest some unfavorable comment placed on the record by an injudicious teacher may react to the future detriment of the child. "A fear of these negative effects of records has no place in a school which understands these dangers and deliberately avoids them." ³⁵

It may also be true that cumulative records like other records have another disadvantage as suggested by Eurich and Wrenn. "With the tendency of the human mind to classify, there is always the danger that because of reports of specific previous behavior that may be included in the record, the teacher-counselor is at first sight prone to consider the child as a problem case." ³⁶ These harmful results will be minimized if a teacher, when recording information, remembers

³⁴ Leonard, Eugenie A. "Personnel Records in Guidance." Catholic Educational Review, XXXIX, October, 1941, 490.

³⁵ National Committee on Cumulative Records, Op. Cit., 57.

³⁶ Eurich and Wrenn, Op. Cit., 74.

that the next teacher who reads the record necessarily forms some judgment regarding the child. So, knowing that the pupil's future happiness may be in his hands, he will endeavor to give a clear and true picture of the child. This picture can easily be distorted, for studies show "that the 'halo' effect appears with monotonous uniformity in nearly all studies of ratings." ³⁷ To avoid these harmful effects of the misuse of records a teacher who is motivated by a sincere desire to help the pupil will not forget that records are merely instruments to help them attain their objective.

During the past few years men in the field of educational research have been studying the problem of improving this instrument so that its maximum value may be reached. The questions often presented to them are: What items must a record include to give assistance in the areas already discussed, and how prevent the record from becoming so complex and time-consuming that the average classroom teacher cannot use it?

The first question concerning the criteria for the choice of items was the subject of a recent study by Stevens, in which he says, "One of the most pressing problems in the development of cumulative records is to establish the validity of the items." ³⁸ Although his study is concerned chiefly with a cumulative record for mentally

³⁷ Allport, Gordon W. "Personality--A Psychological Interpretation." Henry Holt and Co., New York, 1937, 447.

³⁸ Stevens, G. D. "Suggested Criteria for the Selection of Items for a Cumulative Case Study for the Mentally Retarded." Journal of Educational Research, XXXIX, No. 3, November, 1945, 201.

retarded children, he introduces his subject by giving a survey of the views of specialists in this field, which we here summarize.

Segel points out the need for research to establish the validity of the items. He also mentions that the items should be prognostic and predictive. 'Mental tests are a predictive measure and from them we should be able to prognosticate the ultimate educational growth of a child.' He warns that the items should be so selected as to avoid ambiguity and double meaning.

Hill says that the items should be easily evaluated by trained and unskilled workers alike.

Flory suggests that the items should be universally applicable to all children: gifted, normal, or handicapped.

Wallin indicates that the items should be diagnostic, 'If they don't aid in understanding the nature and causes of the failure of a retarded child to make progress, they are of little value.'

The criteria for the selection of items as listed by Strang are:

1. By finding out how often items appear in use.
2. By obtaining expert judgment as to the relative value of different items.
3. By studying statistically the relation between items and scholastic success.
4. By doing research which throws light on the meaning of certain items and information.
5. The items should be consistent with the objectives of the school.

Heck sets up four criteria:

1. Items recorded by city school systems.
2. Items on record forms demanded by the state.
3. Items used in the solution of problems of child accounting; such as failures, eliminations, et al.
4. Items which are of actual use in school work.

In addition to these criteria Stevens adds others:

1. Items should have some degree of future social utility. School records are of value to other agencies after a child leaves school.
2. The items should be related to the specific needs of the school. The nature of the curriculum, the community, and the personnel are factors to be considered.
3. The items should be universally acceptable to all educators in that they are suitable for administration and curricular uses. ³⁹

The following general characteristics of a cumulative record are listed by Traxler:

1. The cumulative record should grow directly out of the objectives of the school in which it is to be used.
2. It should bring together and summarize all the kinds of information which are needed in counseling.

³⁹ Ibid., 201-209.

3. The form should be planned in such a way that it is intrinsically a growth record. (Organization by the time sequence.)
4. The record should consist largely of objective data and of summarizing statements relating and interpreting these data.
5. Some cumulative records are planned to serve as file-folders as well as record forms, but as far as possible the main items should be written on the card itself. ⁴⁰

Dr. Jones quotes the criteria for a good cumulative record as presented by a Committee on Personnel Procedure:

1. The records must show a trend of development of abilities and interests.
2. It must be based on accurate measures and observations.
3. The data must be presented in a form and order capable of showing interrelations and thus presenting a coherent, integrated, and growing picture of the individual. ⁴¹

Reavis says that "all the significant developments which have appeared during the child's career in school should be included." ⁴²

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- ⁴⁰ Traxler, Arthur E. "The Cumulative Record in the Guidance Program." The School Review, LIV, No. 3, March, 1946, 154.
- ⁴¹ Jones, Dr. G. "The Plainfield High School Demonstration Project in Educational Guidance." Educational Records Bureau, New York, 1937, 17.
- ⁴² Reavis, W. C. "Pupil Adjustment in Junior and Senior High Schools." D. C. Heath and Co., New York, 1926, 143.

Just as authorities are not in agreement as to which items should be included, they differ widely on how many items should comprise the record. The chief criterion again seems to be the usability of the record. As soon as it becomes too complex and detailed, it defeats its own purpose, for then it cannot be used by busy teachers. Divided roughly, the data include items concerning personal and family history plus the child's developmental record. Ruch and Segel amplify these two groups into fifteen different kinds of information:

1. Personal and family data.
2. Attendance and scholarship record.
3. Achievement test record.
4. Mental test record.
5. Adjustment inventories.
6. Other tests.
7. Tests of special abilities.
8. Notes regarding test data.
9. Grade placement record (normal progress?)
10. Extra-curricular activities.
11. Record of participation in out-of-school activities.
12. Record of follow-up inquiries.
13. Record of work experiences.
14. Recommendations, observations, suggestions.
15. Record of entries, withdrawals, and other re-entries. ⁴³

The more specific purposes of these different types of information and their significance will be discussed in another chapter.

The problem of keeping the record simple enough for teachers unskilled in reading records and recording information does not seem to

⁴³ Ruch, G. M. and Segel, D. Op.Cit., 10.

have received equally careful consideration. Ruth Strang's list of several criteria for judging a school record shows that some writers are giving thought to this important phase:

1. Is the record easily read?
2. Can it be reproduced quickly and cheaply?
3. Is it used in the guidance of students? ⁴⁴

Another check list evaluates a record system under these headings:

1. Does it permit easy recording?
2. Can much data be recorded by checking and underscoring?
3. Does it eliminate fine details?
4. Does it avoid useless duplication?
5. Is the form durable and economical?
6. Are the items systematically and logically arranged?
7. Is the system simple, yet adequate rather than cumbersome? ⁴⁵

"Recording information directly on to the record form that is to be preserved means fewer errors." ⁴⁶ The terminology used on the record should be kept relatively simple and free from trite or slang expressions. All of the requisites will be given the necessary attention if the one adopting the record remembers that "both the form and content of a record can best be determined by the answers to these three questions: Who is going to use the record; for what purpose is it to be used; and under what conditions?" ⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Strang, Ruth. "The Role of the Teacher in Personnel Work." Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1932, 138-139.

⁴⁵ Calvin, E. S. "What Goes On? School Executive, LVIII, June, 1939, 27.

⁴⁶ Rodgers, Elizabeth G. Op. Cit., 120.

⁴⁷ Leonard, Eugenie A. "Personnel Records in Guidance," ⁴⁸⁴.

CHAPTER II

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RECORDS OBTAINED

After studying the reports of various record committees and other authorities on this subject, the author of this study secured for examination the cumulative records now in use in a number of school systems in different parts of the United States. To obtain these, requests were mailed to three hundred school superintendents. Two hundred systems representing both large and small schools of rural and metropolitan areas in forty-five states responded. As the requests were also sent to diocesan superintendents, thirty-five of the records analyzed are in use in Catholic schools.

The purpose of this analysis was threefold:

1. To obtain additional information about cumulative records from the experiences and practices of other schools.
2. To criticize the records on the basis of their adherence to the principles discussed in Chapter I.
3. To discover what progress Catholic schools throughout the country have made in their record system.

To facilitate the analysis of the occurrence of items, the data were broken down into ten classifications: personal history, parents,

siblings, home, scholarship, tests and ratings, attendance, health, miscellaneous, and size and format of records. Each of these will be described if their meaning is not clear. Table I shows the items usually considered essential in systems of child accounting, and in addition information which is especially important for Catholic children.

TABLE I

Frequency of Occurrence of Personal History
Items in Two Hundred Record Forms

ITEM	NUMBER	PER CENT
Date of birth	196	98
Verification of birth date	89	44.5
Place of birth	168	84
Sex	112	56
Color	75	37.5
Residence	177	88.5
Telephone	97	48.5
Religion of child	4	2
Date and place of Baptism	30	15
Date and place of First Communion	32	16
Date and place of Confirmation	33	16.5

As parental or pupil statements in regard to date of birth are often inaccurate, the school tries to verify this item by obtaining

an official birth certificate. If it is not available, such sources of information as census or hospital records, family Bibles, etc., might be used.

Table II represents the items relating to the parents which the schools seem to regard as significant when studying the child's background. The value of this knowledge as, for example, the parent's education, religion or whether they are living or dead does not seem to be universally recognized at the present time. However, Ruch and Segel in their study of records for guidance purposes list as their first item, "family and cultural background."¹ Flory seems to account for the apparent lack of interest in the child's hereditary background by identifying it with conditions of an earlier educational era in which the teacher was able to obtain all the necessary information without the use of records. "The indigenous teacher who boarded around had little need for an elaborate record system. He knew the academic, social, and physical characteristics of every child in the community. He knew the parents, environment and its influences."²

¹ Ruch and Segel, Op. Cit., 3.

² Flory, Charles D. and Webb, James F. "Cumulative Records for Elementary Schools." Elementary School Journal, XXXVIII, December, 1937, 278.

TABLE II

Frequency of Occurrence of Items Concerning Parents
in Two Hundred Record Forms

ITEM	NUMBER	PER CENT
Name of father	194	97
Name of mother	105	52.5
Religion of father	43	21.5
Religion of mother	26	13
Nationality of father	64	30
Nationality of mother	33	16.5
Birthplace of father	72	36
Birthplace of mother	51	25.5
Education of father	33	16.5
Education of mother	18	9
Occupation of father	162	81
Occupation of mother	67	33.5
Parents living or deceased	56	28
Guardian's Name	105	52.5

Since undesirable emotional relationships existing between siblings, such as the ridicule of a slow child and the jealousy of a more brilliant child, are frequently considered causes of pupil problems, (Strang, Paterson, Nat'l Com.) a study was made to see which schools thought information of this type important. Table III indicates that very few schools include these items.

TABLE III

Frequency of Items Concerning Siblings
in Two Hundred Record Forms

ITEM	NUMBER	PER CENT
Number of boys and girls in the family	26	13
Number of children older and younger	32	16
Total number of children in the family	19	9.5
Education of siblings	9	4.5
Occupation of siblings	11	5.5

The formal data regarding the child's family are often more easily secured, but are not so valuable as the items chosen for study under the heading, home. Information in regard to the economic status of the family obtained through a visit to the child's home is often of greater assistance to teachers who are sincerely trying to understand their pupils. Since parents may resent attempts to acquire knowledge of a personal nature, the teacher must be on the alert to note data which may prove helpful.

The general economic status of the family is a matter of concern for teachers and counselors from kindergarten through college. It affects the cultural benefits in the home and is often an indirect measure of such cultural influences as family sympathy with the school, adequate opportunities for home study, and the number of books and magazines in the home. "The economic status, although there are

striking exceptions, affects a child's feeling of self-respect among his fellows and influences his plans for the continuance of his education." ³ The purpose of recording the language spoken in the home is to assist the teacher of reading in the lower grades. If a child is accustomed to hear a foreign language spoken at home, his difficulties in both language and reading are increased. The last item, signifying where the child lives, may reveal the existence of a broken home. This situation sometimes closely connected with the marital status of parents or illness and death in the home "has a direct relation to the attitude and actions of the pupil when he comes to school." ⁴ Because a teacher may not be obliged to use this item except in a case of maladjustment, it is not difficult to see why only 22% of the schools record it. On the other hand, Professor Strang and others point out that one function of guidance is to effect for the child a better adjustment to his environment. "In every age, in fact, one task of education is to help the child develop fortitude to withstand frustration and insecurity, the while they strive to bring about desirable changes in his environment." ⁵

³ Eurich and Wrenn, Op. Cit., 44.

⁴ Leonard, E. A. Op. Cit., 488.

⁵ Strang, Ruth. "Guidance in Personality Development." 37th Year-book of the National Society for the Study of Education, Chapter VII, 218.

TABLE IV

Frequency of Items Regarding the Home
in Two Hundred Record Forms

ITEM	NUMBER	PER CENT
Rating of home	71	35.5
Language spoken	50	25
With whom pupil lives	44	32

"Teacher marks in academic subjects have assumed a disproportionate emphasis because for a long time they were the main items of concern in a record." ⁶ The present system of recording only average marks for the year or the semester seems to be more in accord with the recommendations of authorities on the subject. This practice reflects the tendency to minimize the value of columns of numbers and to emphasize only those which show general trends of growth or weaknesses. Space on the card is better utilized now by items much more significant for guidance purposes.

⁶ National Committee on Cumulative Records, Op. Cit., 29.

TABLE V

Frequency of Scholarship Items
in Two Hundred Record Forms

ITEM	NUMBER	PER CENT
Average marks	184	92
All school marks	10	5
Marks recorded in letters	79	39.5
Marks recorded in per cent	10	5
No indication of method given	111	55.5

The analysis of the records shows that most schools now recognize the value of different types of tests and make provision on the record for the tabulation of their results. Not only the teacher but also the supervisor, the superintendent, and the guidance worker use test results.

The teacher can use test scores to appraise quickly the intellectual development, academic achievement, interests, strengths and weaknesses of a whole class. . . The supervisor can effect sound personnel classification with the aid of tests. . . Through broad testing programs, the superintendent may obtain significant data for planning and for the evaluation of instructional programs. To the guidance worker, tests are primary professional tools. ⁷

Test scores also serve as a method of double checking the progress of a pupil. When the scores on standardized tests vary greatly from the child's usual achievement, the teacher recognizes at once

⁷ Ibid, 37.

that there is need for further study. He tries to discover if the variation is caused by lack of adjustment, or if it is due to some inaccuracy in the test results. The extent to which schools call for data on tests and ratings is shown in Table VI.

TABLE VI

Frequency of Items Concerning Tests and Ratings
in Two Hundred Record Forms

ITEM	NUMBER	PER CENT
Intelligence Tests	149	74.5
Achievement Tests	131	65.5
Tests--(No type stated)	18	9
Personality Ratings, tests, and teacher estimates	103	51.5
Rating of conduct only	55	27.5

In the previous chapter the writer of this study discussed the importance of a personality rating. It is interesting to note in this analysis that over 50% of the records studied made provision for this very important item, while only 27% were satisfied with the older method of recording the general term, conduct. The number of traits under character or personality headings varied from three to seventeen with an average of eight items per record. Records which seem to follow somewhat the American Council plan list three or five terms descriptive of five or six generalized patterns of behavior, such as emotional control, social relationships, etc. Table VII gives

a list of the 148 items mentioned with the frequency ranging from 1 to 50.

TABLE VII

Descriptive Terms Used on 84 Personality Rating Scales
in Two Hundred Record Forms

FREQUENCY		FREQUENCY	
Ability	1	Dependable	38
Ability to plan	1	Desire to improve	1
Ability to take criticism	5	Domineering	2
Accepted by group	1	Easily led	1
Accuracy	4	Effort	13
Adaptable	3	Energetic	1
Adjustability	1	Emotionally stable	13
Aggressiveness	2	Evaluates achievement	1
Alertness	1	Excitable	1
Ambition	5	Executive ability	1
Amiable	1	Family life	1
Application	4	Flexibility	1
Appreciation	4	Follows directions	7
Argumentative	1	Follows leader	1
Attention	3	Friendly	6
Athletic ability	5	Generous	3
Attitude	2	Good use of time	2
Attitude toward work	2	Gossips	1
Care of property	14	Group Play	4
Careful	3	Health	30
Care of personal belongings	1	Honest	8
Cheerfulness	12	Home duties	1
Claims only his share of attention	1	Impulsive	1
Cleanliness	3	Independent	7
Concern for others	6	Individualist	1
Concentrates	3	Industrious	22
Conduct	5	Influence	1
Confident	1	Initiative	35
Completes work	8	Integrity	2
Cooperative	50	Intelligence	5
Courage	1	Interest	2
Courteous	40	Investigative	1
Creativeness	1	Judges work well	1
Critical thinking	2	Judgment	2
Daydreams	1	Lacks self-confidence	1
Demands attention	1	Leadership	27
		Likes school	1

FREQUENCY

FREQUENCY

Listener	3	Scholastic Zeal	1
Loyalty	2	School spirit	1
Makes best of situation	1	Self-confidence	4
Maturity	4	Self-control	31
Mental health	1	Self-direction	2
Mixer	3	Self-expression	2
Moody	2	Self-reliance	5
Neat	13	Sense of humor	2
Obedience	11	Sensitive	1
Orderliness	4	Serious	1
Originality	4	Serious purpose	1
Passive	1	Show-off	1
Persistent	3	Shy	2
Perseverance	5	Social	3
Personal Appearance	24	Social acceptance	1
Personal habits	4	Social adjustment	4
Personality	3	Social habits	2
Physical vigor	1	Speaks clearly	1
Piety	2	Speech habits	2
Plans work well	1	Spontaneity	2
Poise	3	Tact	4
Posture	6	Takes part in activities	6
Preparation	1	Temper Tantrums	2
Pride in work	1	Thinks for self	1
Promptly gets to work	4	Thrift	10
Promptness	6	Timid	1
Punctuality	12	Tolerance	2
Refinement	2	Trustworthy	3
Regard for safety	5	Truthful	2
Regulations	1	Unreliable	1
Reliability	13	Unusual fears	1
Respect	1	Uses time	2
Respects rights of others	4	Work habits	12
Respect for authority	5	Works alone	3
Response	1	Works well in group	2
Responsibility	3	Works to ability level	1
Resourcefulness	1		

It is evident that many of the terms used are synonymous or almost so. In order to give the data significance it was therefore necessary for the writer of this thesis to combine synonymous terms. This is done in Table VIII, which contains the same data summarized under seventeen headings.

TABLE VIII

Summary of Personality Descriptions

Industry	98
Initiative	96
Cooperation	74
Self-control	68
Social Adjustment	62
Dependability	57
Health	53
Courtesy	49
Honesty	28
Obedience	27
Personal appearance	24
Neatness	21
Punctuality	18
Intelligence	15
Athletic ability	12
Thrift	10
Piety	2

Three records made provision for the recording of scores obtained on adjustment inventories or personality tests; space on sixteen other records provided for some summary or estimate of a child's personality.

Rating scales, since used on 42% of the records seem to be the most widely accepted form of recording personality data.

The analysis of the record forms shows that some schools make provision for rather detailed data regarding attendance. In several instances these items occupied more space on the record than any other type of information. One is inclined to believe, when studying a record of that type, that the value of the record for guidance purposes has not been rightly understood. Although the frequent transfer indicated in the "schools attended" column may be extremely helpful to a teacher in his attempt to understand a maladjusted pupil, there does not seem to be sufficient justification in the research for all the items used.

TABLE IX

Frequency of Items Regarding Attendance, Entrance,
and Withdrawal in Two Hundred Record Forms

	NUMBER	PER CENT
Times Absent and Tardy	186	93
Entrance date	156	78
Schools attended	122	61
Last school attended	63	31.5
Reason for transfer to	22	11
Withdrawal date only	49	24.5
Withdrawal date with reasons	104	52

The change in emphasis to include more complete health data on cumulative record cards as mentioned in Chapter I is easily perceived in this analysis. Since a total of 61.5% of the records gave some consideration to this item, it is an indication of progress in the right direction. A cumulative health record proves an efficient instrument in stressing health and physical fitness as important objectives of the school. Here again the principle applies that whatever the teacher considers worth recording assumes greater proportions in the mind of the child. Consequently, he is more willing to cooperate in learning good health habits when he knows his teacher is that interested in his welfare. "The child is a biologic unity and no aspect of the self can be dealt with apart from the other aspects." ⁸ As no educator will deny the truth of this statement, it provides additional justification for the inclusion of health data in our records.

TABLE X

Frequency of Items Regarding Health
in Two Hundred Record Forms

	NUMBER	PER CENT
Complete health record	80	40
Simple rating of health	43	21.5
Physical disabilities	70	35
Immunizations and dates	102	51

⁸ Rodgers, Elizabeth G. Op. Cit., 120.

Special aptitudes and interests are listed by Traxler, 9 Harap,¹⁰ and Geiger ¹¹ as of great importance. "To foster dynamic interests is a basic necessity." ¹² This information may be obtained from the pupil's own report or from records of his past experience; i.e., from his autobiography. It is also wise to record whatever the pupil does exceptionally well and whether his usual occupations during leisure hours are well done or not. The purpose of these data is to report the activities which bring satisfaction to the child. For this reason a teacher would not record the fact that a child plays a musical instrument if he does so only because of parental compulsion. Although "ability and interest do not complete the information needed in order to make a wise determination of vocational fitness"¹³ these early interests and special abilities often prove significant when a teacher must advise concerning further education.

A record of extra-curricular activities sometimes serves similar purposes, and they may account for poor scholastic achievement. When the pupil is occupied by a great number of out-of-school activities,

9 Traxler, Arthur E. Op. Cit., 155.

10 Harap, Henry. "The Changing Curriculum." Appleton-Century, New York, 1937, 51.

11 Geiger, "The Importance of Cumulative Records." The National Elementary School Principal, XVIII, October, 1938, 29.

12 Harap, Henry. Op. Cit., 51.

13 Symonds, P. M. "Diagnosing Personality and Conduct" quoted by Eurich and Wrenn. Op. Cit., 106.

whether they are regular work, cultural activities or club work, the teacher can often see in this conflict of interests a cause of classroom difficulties. The value of these two items does not appear to be recognized, as they are not included on two-thirds of the records. Perhaps the reason for the low percentage of schools recording "later education" is the fact that many records make provision for all twelve years. Since the great majority of our Catholic schools do not include the high-school course, the above system is not being followed in the construction of the present record. The name of the high school to which an elementary pupil transfers is of interest to superintendents, research workers, and others who are interested in the question: How adequately are Catholic elementary graduates provided for? In 73.5% of the records provision is made to supply either the name of the school or data on what later education a child has had.

A blank space on 71% of the records analyzed headed "Notes or Remarks" made provision for such information as the following: teacher comments and suggestions, a summary of a case study, a record of contacts with social agencies or the juvenile court, and remarks to the effect that additional information can be obtained from the confidential file or from a certain faculty member.

The teacher's name or initials appeared on 61% of the forms either in the scholastic record or on the personality rating chart. The research yielded no evidence as to the weight of this item except

in the record of standardized tests where it is considered very important for checking the results.

Although requests for manuals to accompany the records were sent to the 200 schools included in this study, only 17.5% responded by sending one. Others said that mimeographed directions mailed to the principals sufficed for their needs.

TABLE XI

Frequency of Occurrence of Miscellaneous Items
in Two Hundred Record Forms

ITEM	NUMBER	PER CENT
Special interests or abilities	84	42
Extra-curricular activities	67	33.5
Later education	62	31
Transferred to	85	42.5
Notes and remarks	143	71.5
Teacher's name	132	61

The latest phase of the analysis was a study of the size and format of the records. The results shown in Table XII indicate that there were 35 different sizes, with 5" x 8" and 8-1/2" x 11" having the greater preference. These are the sizes recommended by the National Educational Association Committee on Standard Record forms and according to Colvin "are most frequently suited to filing systems now in use." ¹⁴

¹⁴ Colvin, E. S. Op. Cit., 26.

The card form seems to be used more extensively than either the folder or the loose-leaf sheets. Table XII shows that 62.5% of the schools have adopted a card, while only 28.5% use the folder. This finding did not agree with what Ruch and Segel think an ideal cumulative record should be.

Cumulative records are commonly cards, booklets, or folders. Each has its advantages, but the folder type appears to be the most flexible in its use.

Regularly recorded data may be entered on forms printed on the record proper. Special records, such as health charts, anecdotes, and confidential information, may be placed on separate forms and inserted in the folder, especially since there seems to be some difference of opinion as to what records should be regarded as confidential. ¹⁵

Although some of the records analyzed included several items in addition to those listed in Chapter II, it was decided not to include more than sixty-three in this study. The writer of this thesis was guided in the choice of items by the list selected for consideration in a recent nationwide survey made by the United States Office of Education.

When the analysis was completed, it was evident that a number of items, such as those relating to siblings, might have been omitted. The indications on the newer records are that, "as the science of education develops, other areas of pupil behavior will require

¹⁵ Ruch G. M. and Segel, D. Op. Cit., 80.

investigation and the number of items will be increased." 16

TABLE XII

Sizes of the Two Hundred Cumulative Records Analyzed

SIZES	FREQUENCY	PER CENT	SIZES	FREQUENCY	PER CENT
4 x 6	15	7.5	8 x 12-1/2	1	.5
4-1/2 x 7-1/4	1	.5	8 x 15	1	.5
4-1/2 x 8	1	.5	8-1/4 x 10-1/2	1	.5
4-3/4 x 8	1	.5	8-1/2 x 11	44	22.0
5 x 8	51	25.5	8-1/2 x 12	2	1.0
5 x 7	1	.5	9 x 11	5	2.5
5 x 7-1/2	1	.5	9 x 11-1/2	2	1.0
5 x 8-1/2	15	7.5	9 x 11-3/4	2	1.0
5-1/2 x 8	1	.5	9 x 12	21	15.0
6 x 8	3	1.5	9 x 14	1	.5
6 x 8-1/2	1	.5	9 x 15	1	.5
6-1/2 x 8-1/4	1	.5	9-1/4 x 11-1/4	1	.5
6-1/2 x 9-1/2	1	.5	9-1/2 x 11-3/4	2	1.0
7-1/2 x 14-1/2	1	.5	9-1/2 x 11-1/2	2	1.0
7-3/4 x 10-3/4	1	.5	9-1/2 x 12	5	2.5
8 x 9-1/2	2	1.0	9-1/4 x 11-3/4	2	1.0
8 x 10	5	2.5	9-1/2 x 14	1	.5
8 x 11	2	1.0	10 x 12	1	.5
8 x 12	1	.5			

16 Segel, David. "Nature and Use of the Cumulative Record." Office of Education Bulletin, 1938, No. 3, 1.

TABLE XIII

Difference in Format in Two Hundred Records

ITEM	NUMBER	PER CENT
Card	125	62.5
Folder	57	28.5
Loose leaf	14	7
Cards in a folder	4	2

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF A NEW CUMULATIVE RECORD FOR CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

As mentioned previously in Chapter I, the objectives of Catholic educators are not in perfect harmony with the aims which pervade secular education today; consequently, this difference should be reflected in our record system. Accordingly, the criteria adopted for the selection of items on a new cumulative record for Catholic schools are:

1. The items which past experience and present practice affirm as requisites in a Catholic school record system.
2. The items regarded as significant by research workers.
3. The items occurring on 50% or more of the records analyzed.

The first item added to those commonly mentioned under "personal history" is, perhaps, the most significant, "date and place of Baptism." If principals require parents to present a Baptismal Certificate when the child enters school for the first time, this important piece of information is certain to be reliable. It may also serve as some verification of the "date of birth" when no birth certificate can be obtained. Obviously, the primary purpose of establishing with certainty a valid date of Baptism is to have greater assurance that this all-important sacrament has not been neglected. Should a child transfer to another school before First Communion, both the pastor and principal will know that he is entitled to receive the other

sacraments. Then, too, when parish records cannot be consulted, requests for this information are often sent to schools.

Catholic schools also record the date and place of "First Communion" as an additional protection for the child should this fact ever in future years be questioned. Teachers in transient areas especially find this knowledge helpful when they begin to prepare classes for the reception of the sacraments. It is not an uncommon occurrence to find on a record that the reception of the sacraments has been entirely neglected because of these frequent transfers. For the same reasons a record is kept of the "date and place of Confirmation." To Catholic educators the date on which a child begins to live a supernatural life is far more important than the date he enters school. Since it is the primary objective of Catholic teachers to guide the child in the formation of a strong character based on Catholic principles, a serious part of their responsibility depends on the efforts teachers make to insure for the child the graces of the sacraments.

The complete list of items regarding "personal history" as chosen for the new record is the following:

Personal History Items Chosen for the Writer's Record Form

1. Date of birth
2. Verification of birth date
3. Place of birth
4. Sex
5. Address
6. Telephone

7. Baptism, date and place
8. First Communion, date and place
9. Confirmation, date and place

Under the group of items entitled "family history," the items "marital status of parents" and "rating of home" are listed separately because to many teachers the latter term is rather vague. On this record it refers to the moral influences of a child's immediate environment rather than to the economic status of parents, as the former is considered of much greater significance for guidance purposes. The teacher who knows that a child is surrounded by evil influences when he leaves the classroom will be more sympathetic and interested in his spiritual welfare. Although it is usually only by indirect methods that a teacher can learn the "marital status of parents," this information, as was explained in Chapter II, can often prove very helpful in dealing with maladjusted pupils.

All Catholic school records include the item, "religion of the parent." Even if the research does not yield any evidence as to the importance of this item, every principal and teacher finds it of considerable importance in the interpretation of a child's home situation to know whether or not both parents are Catholic. Opposition to school authorities or indifference to school problems can often be explained in this manner. The item, "language spoken," was retained for the reasons mentioned in Chapter II, and because it was found on all the newer records.

The complete list of "family history" items includes the following:

Family History Items Chosen for the Writer's Record Form

1. Names of father and mother
2. Name of guardian
3. Occupation of father
4. Marital status of parents
5. Rating of home
6. Language spoken
7. Religion of father
8. Religion of mother

Scholarship data comprise the data regarding tests plus the average semester marks. Sufficient reasons are found both in the research and on the records to warrant keeping the items listed below:

Scholarship Items Chosen for the Writer's Record Form

1. Average grades
2. Achievement test results
3. Intelligence test results

The items selected under "attendance" were those which occurred in over 50% of the records analyzed. The others did not seem to be considered important by enough schools to justify their adoption. The selection of items follows:

1. Times absent and tardy
2. Schools attended

3. Entrance date

4. Withdrawal date with reasons

The first "miscellaneous" item chosen for the new record, "notes and remarks," appeared on 72% of the forms examined. It was thought best to retain it provided the size adopted would allow sufficient space for its inclusion. There often are helpful suggestions in regard to pupil needs, or comments on the best methods of securing the child's cooperation that one teacher would like to pass on to another and this space provides the opportunity.

The term "vaccination date" including, as it does, all immunization data, was selected because 51% of the forms record it. This item is usually placed under "health," but, due to the fact that that special heading was not used, it is included with the "miscellaneous" items. In looking over the analysis of the records, a complete health record was noted on only 40% of the records while a very simple health rating appeared on 22% of the others. Considered separately the significance of this item did not appear; hence it was thought that most schools seemed to prefer keeping a separate health record. However, were the two items related, 62% of the records made some provision for health data. This would have shown clearly that this information must be included. Later when the proposed list of items was submitted to Catholic elementary principals, the omission was noted and corrected. Consequently, a complete health record appears on the final record.

The newest records and more recent research point out clearly that greater attention is being focused on "personality ratings." To discover which character traits are most worth inculcating in our Catholic children, five hundred Catholic teachers were asked to list six traits they regarded as most important. Although eight was the average number used on the records analyzed, the research seemed to indicate that teachers can scarcely record more than six. Segel states that "better results are secured when the traits being rated are defined on a scale of values." ¹ Lack of space did not permit this on the first record form designed by the writer, the 5" x 8" card; but the suggestion was followed on the second form, the 5" x 8" folder. Recording the teacher's name" was retained as an item since 61% of the forms included it.

Special abilities and interests were listed with the new record items, because there seemed to be sufficient evidence in recent research for these items. To quote but one authority, Harap writes: "Present interests are basic factors in the learning process for they represent his immediate goals toward the realization of which energy is available." ²

As it is in the choice of their out-of-school activities that many of our Catholic children need guidance, the teacher should endeavor to discover and record something about how a child spends his leisure hours. A good suggestion from an interested teacher is often sufficient

¹ Segel, David. Op. Cit., 28.

² Harap, Henry. Op. Cit., 38.

to direct a pupil's attention toward more worthy goals. In this way the teacher may also prevent the formation of undesirable habits.

Listed below are the remaining items:

Miscellaneous Items Chosen for the Writer's Record Form

1. Notes and remarks
2. Vaccination date
3. Personality rating
4. Teacher's name
5. Special abilities
6. Outside activities

In order to determine the size of the final record, principals were asked to check their preferences of the three sizes which occurred more frequently in the analysis: 5"x8"; 8-1/2"x11"; 9"x12".

The complete list of proposed items was then submitted to one hundred fifty elementary principals in all sections of the United States. In the light of their past experience they were requested to evaluate the items on a five-point scale stating if the information was required very frequently, frequently, occasionally, rarely or never. Their reactions to the items and their suggestions for additions to the list are discussed in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

REACTIONS OF PRINCIPALS TO THE RECORD

When the rating scale for cumulative record items was mailed to one hundred fifty Catholic elementary school principals, one hundred six responded. This number represents both large and small schools of thirty-seven different states. The letter which accompanies the scale requests them to check the items in accordance with the number of times they had been called upon to use information of each type. In this manner the writer hoped to obtain the reactions of principals in regard to the items in terms of actual need. Since blanks were provided for five additional items, the principals were likewise offered the opportunity of suggesting those items they considered significant and which had been omitted from the tentative list. The purpose of this provision was to obtain further information on specific problems of Catholic schools. It was decided that on the basis of the principals' reactions a revision of the cumulative record card items could be made before the card itself was designed. A copy of both the letter and the form sent to the principals follows:

Dear Sister Principal,

It is my task as partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's degree to devise a cumulative record for Catholic elementary schools. In order to obtain information as to what facts are considered most important, I have completed a study of two hundred cumulative

records from different sections of the United States. The nonstarred items listed on the attached sheet occurred in fifty per cent or more of the records. Those which are starred were added because they seemed desirable for our Catholic children. Although numbers twenty-nine and thirty did not occur on fifty per cent of the records, they were added because they were thought useful for guidance purposes.

Since you have often been called upon to give pertinent information in regard to your students, your rating of these items will be of invaluable assistance to me. If you have experienced very frequent need of the items, check the first column; if used frequently, the second; occasionally, the third; rarely, the fourth; and never, the fifth.

To insure the same interpretation of some of the terms used, I shall try to clarify their meaning. By "verification of birth date" is meant the evidence given in addition to a parent's word; e.g., Birth Certificate, Hospital Record, Family Bible, etc. "Marital status" refers to a situation in which the parents have secured an ecclesiastical separation, a legal divorce, or are divorced and remarried. The term "rating of home" means the moral influence of the child's immediate environment classified as good, average, or poor. Several important character traits will be included in the "personality rating scale."

Certain other headings; such as, special abilities, outside activities, and so forth, will also be broken down. Hence, the enclosed

list is not the final cumulative record but merely the headings that are to be used in it.

Will you please check this rating scale as soon as you can? I will be very grateful for this favor.

Sincerely yours,

A RATING SCALE
for
CUMULATIVE RECORD ITEMS

Very Fre- Occasion-
Frequently quently ally Rarely Never

PERSONAL HISTORY

1. Date of birth.....().....().....()...()...()
2. Verification of birth date.....().....().....()...()...()
3. Place of birth.....().....().....()...()...()
4. Sex.....().....().....()...()...()
5. Address.....().....().....()...()...()
6. Telephone.....().....().....()...()...()
- 7.* Baptism, date and place.....().....().....()...()...()
- 8.* First Communion, date and place.().....().....()...()...()
- 9.* Confirmation, date and place....().....().....()...()...()

FAMILY HISTORY

10. Names of father and mother.....().....().....()...()...()
11. Name of guardian.....().....().....()...()...()
12. Occupation of father.....().....().....()...()...()
- 13.* Marital status of parents.....().....().....()...()...()

Very Fre- Occasion-
Frequently quently ally Rarely Never

- 14.* Rating of home.....().....().....()...()...()
- 15.* Language spoken.....().....().....()...()...()
- 16.* Religion of father.....().....().....()...()...()
- 17.* Religion of mother.....().....().....()...()...()

SCHOLARSHIP

18. Average grades.....().....().....()...()...()
19. Achievement test results.....().....().....()...()...()
20. Intelligence test results.....().....().....()...()...()

ATTENDANCE

21. Times absent and tardy.....().....().....()...()...()
22. Schools attended.....().....().....()...()...()
23. Entrance date.....().....().....()...()...()
24. Withdrawal date with reasons....().....().....()...()...()

MISCELLANEOUS

25. Notes and remarks.....().....().....()...()...()
26. Vaccination date.....().....().....()...()...()
27. Personality rating.....().....().....()...()...()
28. Teacher's name.....().....().....()...()...()
29. Special abilities.....().....().....()...()...()
30. Outside activities.....().....().....()...()...()

(Please add additional items here.)

31.().....().....()...()...()
32.().....().....()...()...()

Very Fre- Occasion-
Frequently quently ally Rarely Never

33.().....()....()...()...()
 34.().....()....()...()...()
 35.().....()....()...()...()

Would you prefer the size of the card to be: (Underline)

8-1/2 x 11

5 x 8

9 x 12

As the size of the record would ultimately depend on the principal's choice, the number of items would be somewhat determined by the one most principals would consider best adapted to their use.

When one hundred six principals had responded, their replies were totaled in the various columns as shown in Table XIV. A small number of principals did not check every item; consequently, there is a slight discrepancy in the total number of responses. In the tables which follow it is interesting to note which items had never been used by some schools and those which are used most frequently.

TABLE XIV

RATING SCALE RETURNS AS CHECKED BY PRINCIPALS

ITEMS	Very Frequently	Fre- quently	Occasion- ally	Rarely	Never
PERSONAL HISTORY					
1. Date of birth.....	(93)	(9)	(4)	(0)	(0)
2. Verification of birth date.....	(46)	(18)	(20)	(11)	(6)
3. Place of birth.....	(66)	(15)	(12)	(9)	(3)
4. Sex.....	(60)	(8)	(9)	(12)	(10)
5. Address.....	(82)	(15)	(4)	(1)	(0)

Very Fre- Occasion-
Frequently quently ally Rarely Never

-
6. Telephone.....(48).....(13)....(21)....(12)....(8)
 7. Baptism, date and place.....(54).....(18)....(16)....(9)....(4)
 8. First Communion, date and place.(41).....(19)....(23)....(12)....(7)
 9. Confirmation, date and place....(35).....(13)....(26)....(17)....(9)

FAMILY HISTORY

10. Names of father and mother.....(78).....(15)....(9)....(4)....(0)
 11. Name of guardian.....(66).....(18)....(12)....(5)....(1)
 12. Occupation of father.....(53).....(19)....(22)....(7)....(4)
 13. Marital status of parents.....(15).....(21)....(29)....(20)....(15)
 14. Rating of home.....(14).....(30)....(28)....(20)....(9)
 15. Language spoken.....(14).....(13)....(19)....(29)....(25)
 16. Religion of father.....(35).....(22)....(19)....(16)....(10)
 17. Religion of mother.....(36).....(21)....(19)....(15)....(9)

SCHOLARSHIP

18. Average grades.....(80).....(15)....(9)....(1)....(1)
 19. Achievement test results.....(45).....(30)....(23)....(2)....(2)
 20. Intelligence test results.....(56).....(29)....(17)....(2)....(1)

ATTENDANCE

21. Times absent and tardy.....(55).....(15)....(19)....(13)....(1)
 22. Schools attended.....(47).....(20)....(22)....(13)....(1)
 23. Entrance date.....(65).....(18)....(14)....(5)....(1)
 24. Withdrawal date with reasons....(54).....(21)....(20)....(8)....(0)

MISCELLANEOUS

25. Notes and Remarks.....(28).....(29)....(17)....(12)....(3)

Very Fre- Occasion-
Frequently quently ally Rarely Never

26. Vaccination date.....	(26).....	(20)....	(18)....	(18)....	(12)
27. Personality rating.....	(28).....	(24)....	(29)....	(12)....	(6)
28. Teacher's Name.....	(28).....	(11)....	(22)....	(19)....	(18)
29. Special abilities.....	(16).....	(33)....	(36)....	(8)....	(4)
30. Outside activities.....	(13).....	(24)....	(39)....	(13)....	(9)

The items to be considered for the revised record were those which occurred with the highest percentage of frequency when the totals of the first three columns were obtained. That is, if an item was checked as being called for very frequently, frequently or at least occasionally, it would merit consideration.

In the "personal history" section most of the items seem to be regarded as highly significant. Under "family history" the items, "marital status of parents" and "language spoken" appear to be considered only slightly important by a number of principals. As one would expect with the former emphasis which records placed on marks, all the scholarship items are highly esteemed. The same is true of the items under "attendance." The experience of the principals seem to indicate the importance of this type of data. It is under the group of "miscellaneous" items that one can perceive a wide spread of opinion. Although 80% of the principals thought they needed information about a pupil's "special abilities," only 75% valued the item, "outside activities," as having much merit. It is encouraging to

notice that 70% appreciate the significance of teacher "comments" and that 76.4% have realized the great necessity of a personality rating. The "teacher's name" and the "date of vaccination" are the two items of this group that less than two-thirds use.

TABLE XV

NUMBER AND PER CENT OF PRINCIPALS USING ITEMS
ON THE TENTATIVE LIST

PERSONAL HISTORY ITEMS	NUMBER	PER CENT
Date of birth	106	100
Verification of birth date	84	79.2
Place of birth.....	93	87.7
Sex.....	77	72.6
Address.....	101	95.2
Telephone.....	82	77.3
Baptism, date and place.....	88	83.0
First Communion, date and place.....	83	78.3
Confirmation, date and place.....	74	69.8
FAMILY HISTORY		
Names of father and mother.....	102	96.2
Name of guardian.....	96	90.5
Occupation of father.....	94	88.6
Marital status of parents.....	65	61.3
Rating of home.....	72	67.9
Language spoken	46	43.3

ITEMS	NUMBER	PER CENT
Religion of father.....	76	72.2
Religion of mother.....	76	72.2
SCHOLARSHIP		
Average grades	104	98.1
Achievement test results	98	92.4
Intelligence test results	102	96.2
ATTENDANCE		
Times absent and tardy	89	83.9
Schools attended	89	83.9
Entrance date	97	91.5
Withdrawal date with reasons	95	89.6
MISCELLANEOUS		
Notes and remarks	74	69.8
Vaccination date	64	60.3
Personality rating	81	76.4
Teacher's name	61	57.5
Special abilities	85	80.1
Outside activities	76	72.2

In order to present a clearer picture of the above data, Table XVI shows the items on the scale arranged in the order of descending frequency.

TABLE XVI

USE OF ITEMS ARRANGED IN THE ORDER OF DESCENDING FREQUENCY

ITEMS	NUMBER	PER CENT
Date of birth	106	100
Average grades	104	98.1
Names of father and mother	102	96.2
Address	101	95.2
Achievement test results	98	92.4
Entrance date	97	91.5
Name of guardian	96	90.5
Withdrawal date with reasons	95	89.6
Occupation of father	94	88.6
Place of birth	93	87.7
Times absent and tardy	89	83.9
Schools attended	89	83.9
Baptism, date and place	88	83.0
Special abilities	85	80.1
Verification of birth date	84	79.2
First Communion, date and place	83	78.3
Telephone	82	77.3
Personality rating	81	76.4
Sex	77	72.6
Religion of father and mother.....	76	72.2
Outside activities	76	72.2

ITEMS	NUMBER	PER CENT
Notes and remarks	74	69.8
Confirmation	74	69.8
Rating of home	72	67.9
Marital status of parents	65	61.3
Vaccination date	64	60.3
Teacher's name	61	57.5
Language spoken	46	43.3

Table XVII is presented to show a comparison between the information contained in the preceding table and the percentage of all the records analyzed using the same items.

TABLE XVII

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE FREQUENCY OF USE OF ITEMS
BY PRINCIPALS AND ITEMS OCCURRING ON TWO HUNDRED RECORDS

ITEMS		
PERSONAL HISTORY	CATHOLIC PRINCIPALS	ALL RECORDS ANALYZED
Date of birth	100	98
Verification of birth date	79.2	44.5
Place of birth	87.7	84
Sex	72.6	56
Address	95.2	88.5
Telephone	77.3	48.5
Baptism, date and place	83	15

ITEMS	CATHOLIC PRINCIPALS	ALL RECORDS ANALYZED
First Communion, date and place	78.3	16
Confirmation, date and place	69.8	16.5

FAMILY HISTORY

Name of father	96.2	97.0
Name of mother	96.2	52.5
Name of guardian	90.5	52.5
Occupation of father	88.6	81.0
Marital status of parents	61.3	----
Rating of home	67.9	35.5
Language spoken	43.3	25.0
Religion of father	72.2	21.5
Religion of mother	72.2	13.0

SCHOLARSHIP

Average grades	98.1	92.0
Achievement test results	92.4	65.5
Intelligence test results	96.2	74.5

ATTENDANCE

Times absent and tardy	83.9	93.0
Schools attended	83.9	61.0
Entrance date	91.5	78.0
Withdrawal date with reason	89.6	52.0

MISCELLANEOUS

Notes and remarks	69.8	71.5
Vaccination date	60.3	51.0

ITEMS	CATHOLIC PRINCIPALS	ALL RECORDS ANALYZED
Personality rating	76.4	52.5
Teacher's name	57.5	61.0
Special abilities	80.1	42.0
Outside activities	72.2	33.5

SIZE

5 x 8	61.1	25.5
8-1/2 x 11	19.8	22.0
9 x 12	6.6	15.0

The most interesting and significant aspect of this section of the study was the response given in regard to new items. Although many principals commented to the effect that the tentative list of items included all the information they had been required to give, others offered valuable suggestions. The new items and their frequencies are listed in Table XVIII.

TABLE XVIII

NEW ITEMS SUGGESTED BY PRINCIPALS

ITEM	FREQUENCY
PERSONAL HISTORY	
Religion of pupil	1
Picture of pupil	1
FAMILY HISTORY	
Number of children in family	4
Birthplace of father and mother	3

ITEM	FREQUENCY
Mother's maiden name	2
Financial status of parents	2
Cooperation of home with school	1
Business phone of father	1
Occupation of mother	1
Education of parents	1
SCHOLARSHIP	
Rank in graduating class	3
Special honors	2
Completed grade eight	1
Grades repeated	1
General average	1
Grades expressed in numbers not letters	1
ATTENDANCE	
Date of graduation	5
High school chosen	3
Grade entered	1
Date re-entered grade	1
HEALTH	
Health rating	7
Physical disabilities	2
MISCELLANEOUS	
Attitude toward authority, work, class- mates	3
Conduct	2

ITEM	FREQUENCY
Offices held	2
Hobbies	1
Growth in character	1
Record include years from kindergarten through grade twelve	1

A study of these items reveals the fact that many principals desire the record to be more comprehensive than the tentative list made provision for. A minimum of items had originally been selected due to the fact that only a limited number of Catholic teachers are fortunate enough to receive any clerical assistance. Two factors, however, would not warrant including all these new items in the record:

1. The low frequency of the suggestion.
2. The size of the card chosen.

Some principals stated that they chose the 5" x 8" card because that happened to fit their present files even though the larger size would more completely cover their needs. It seemed rather strange that principals who wanted several additional items added checked the smaller card as their preference. The three to one acceptance of the 5" x 8" card is easily understandable if one recalls that elementary principals at times have hundreds of children in their schools. The filing cabinets for all the larger size cumulative records would occupy more space than is usually available in our Catholic schools for that purpose. By way of compromise, the final record is prepared in two forms: the 5" x 8" card containing the minimum essentials, as it were, of a cumulative record based on those items rated highest

in Table XVIII; and a 5" x 8" folder. The latter, while keeping the desired size, provides space for several additional items including a more complete health record and a more desirable method of rating personality traits. According to Symonds "greater attention should be paid in defining the qualities or traits to be rated and more extensive definitions should be introduced in order to increase the reliability of a personality rating scale." ¹

As all Catholic educators seem to agree that character formation is a primary objective of the schools, the results of the study made to ascertain which character traits Catholic teachers thought most important to instil into their pupils were most interesting. Five hundred teachers recorded the six traits they considered most significant on a blank similar to the one which follows.

SAMPLE BLANK FOR CHARACTER TRAITS

A study was made recently of the character or personality traits which are usually rated on the cumulative record cards of elementary school children. Those listed below occurred most frequently. As Catholic teachers you can, perhaps, think of other character traits that are more desirable for our Catholic school children. Will you please list the six which you consider most important. They will, of course, be traits that teachers can easily rate by observing the daily

¹ Symonds, P. M. "Diagnosing Personality and Conduct" quoted by Eurich and Wrenn, Op. Cit., 59.

actions of their pupils. You may use some of those already listed if you wish.

CHARACTER TRAITS COMMONLY LISTED ON CUMULATIVE RECORDS	ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS	YOUR LIST

1. Cooperation	1. Obedience (attitude toward authority)	1.
2. Dependability (reliability)	2. Honesty (word and action)	2.
3. Work habits (industry)	3. Loyalty	3.
4. Initiative (leadership)	4. Punctuality	4.
5. Courtesy (consideration for others)	5. Cheerfulness	5.
6. Self-control		6.

Your assistance in this work is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

The complete results of this study are shown in Table XIX. The total number of traits suggested is 151.

TABLE XIX

DESIRABLE CHARACTER TRAITS SUGGESTED BY CATHOLIC TEACHERS

TRAIT	FREQUENCY	TRAIT	FREQUENCY
Ability to get along with people	2	Amiability	1
Ability to give and take	2	Application	4
Accuracy	10	Appreciation	7
Adaptability	6	Attention	8
Affability	2	Attitude toward authority	12
Agreeableness	1	Attitude toward work	2
Alertness	5	Bravery	1
Ambition	6	Carefulness	1

TRAIT	FREQUENCY	TRAIT	FREQUENCY
Cheerfulness	75	Effort	14
Cleanliness	9	Endurance	1
Clean Speech	1	Enthusiasm	4
Clear thinking	1	Even-tempered	1
Charity	5	Fairness	6
Charm	1	Faithfulness to religious duty	3
Companionship	2	Fear of God	1
Completes work on time	2	Fidelity to duty	1
Concentration	1	Firmness	1
Congeniality	1	Fortitude	5
Conscientiousness	4	Friendliness	10
Consideration for others	17	General Conduct	1
Cooperation	228	Geniality	1
Courage	9	Gentleness	2
Courtesy	288	Good use of leisure	1
Creativeness	2	Good will	2
Decency	1	Graciousness	1
Dependability	180	Gratitude	5
Dependence	1	Happiness	1
Determination	2	Helpfulness	3
Diligence	6	Honesty	241
Docility	5	Honor	1
Eagerness for experimentation	1	Humility	4
Efficiency	2		

TRAIT	FREQUENCY	TRAIT	FREQUENCY
Independence	1	Participation in school democracy	2
Industry	48	Patience	3
Ingenuity	1	Patriotism	2
Intelligence	1	Perseverance	15
Interestedness	11	Persistence	2
Judgment	3	Personal appearance	6
Justice	11	Personality	2
Kindness	10	Pleasant disposition	1
Leadership	15	Pliability	1
Liberality	10	Poise	2
Loving	1	Posture	1
Loyalty	102	Prayerfulness	6
Moderation	1	Precision	1
Modesty	1	Pride in Catholic Faith	1
Morality	4	Promptness	5
Neatness	56	Prudence	3
Neighborliness	1	Punctuality	108
Nobility	2	Purity	1
Obedience	303	Readiness	1
Observant	2	Reconciliation	48
Openmindedness	1	Religious attitude	7
Orderliness	3	Resourcefulness	2
Originality	2	Respect for others	11

TRAIT	FREQUENCY	TRAIT	FREQUENCY
Respect for property	11	Stability	7
Response to training	1	Studiousness	2
Responsibility	11	Submissiveness	1
Reverence	9	Sympathetic	7
School spirit	2	Tact	1
Security	1	Temperance	2
Self-confidence	10	Thoughtfulness	6
Self-control	235	Thrift	5
Self-reliance	2	Tolerance	2
Self-respect	8	True piety	7
Self-sacrifice	15	Truthfulness	9
Seriousness of purpose	1	Trustworthiness	2
Simplicity	2	Unselfishness	7
Sincerity	5	Vitality	1
Sociability	10	Walking habits	1
Social adjustment	3	Willingness	2
Social competency	1	Willingness to take cor- rections	5
Spirited	1	Will power	3
Spirituality	5	Work habits	133
Sportmanship	5	Zeal	1

Table XX lists the six highest ranking traits in the order of the frequency of their occurrence. These are the traits adopted for the personality rating scale on both cumulative record cards for Catholic elementary schools.

TABLE XX

SUMMARY OF CHARACTER TRAITS WITH HIGHEST FREQUENCIES

TRAIT	FREQUENCY
Obedience	303
Courtesy	288
Industry, Work habits, etc.	286
Honesty, Truthfulness	250
Self-control, stability	242
Dependability, Reliability, Responsibility, etc.	241

CHAPTER V

THE REVISION OF THE CUMULATIVE RECORD ON THE BASIS OF CRITICISMS RECEIVED

It would seem that after the list of items for the cumulative record had been further validated by the principals' opinions, the construction of the final form should be a comparatively easy task. This, however, did not prove to be true due to the choice of the 5" x 8" card. The new items included on the writer's 5" x 8" card are: "physical disabilities," "type of immunization," "transferred to," "date of graduation," "high school entered." Although it appeared desirable to include more of the valuable suggestions given, lack of space did not permit their use. The only item dropped from the original list is "Notes and Remarks." It was decided that any additional information could more conveniently be recorded on a separate record.

The new items listed above are included because they met the criteria for the selection of items even though the terms may be a bit misleading. Under "physical disabilities," for example, provision is made for recording any serious deviation from normalcy in health. If a teacher or nurse notices a hearing deficiency or if the child has impaired vision, this information is to be noted on the card. Special abilities on this card will also serve as the best place to record any honors won by the pupil. "Out-of-school activities" include, of course, hobbies and cultural interests or lessons. To provide additional

follow-up data, the term, "transferred to" is rather essential. This also holds true in the case of "date of graduation" and "high school entered." Information of this kind is frequently requested by employers. The type of immunization is more significant than the date; therefore, this item was expanded to include both the date and type of immunization. The suggestion to record the occupation of the mother appears advisable at this time when many mothers are employed outside the home. In case a guardian takes the father's place in the child's regard, information about his occupation is just as important as an indication of the economic status of the family.

The first form provides for a very simple personality rating of the traits chosen by Catholic teachers as being most desirable. The teacher is expected to record an annual estimate of each pupil's character. This rating will give future teachers some indications of trends of growth. Authorities advise that this rating be made some time before the end of the school term, preferably in April. By that time the teacher has had enough time "to learn" the child and is not as occupied with scholastic averages as she is at the close of the term. The letters used for the ratings are as follows: A - above average, B - average, C - below average. Although some schools do not rate personality below the fourth or fifth grades, space is provided on this record for all eight years as it is assumed that it is possible to rate children on at least three of the character traits: obedience, courtesy, and honesty, before that time. The teacher's initials are signed after her estimate.

In regard to achievement test data it is considered very important that the name of the test as well as the form and the date given be recorded. Since the results are often expressed in terms of percentile rank rather than in grade equivalent scores, provision has been made for tabulating either or both scores.

The completed form follows:

THE OBERSE SIDE OF THE RECORD

Catholic Elementary School Record

Family Name	Christian Name	Middle Name	School
Date of Birth: Mo. Day-Year	How verified	Place of Birth	
Address	Telephone	Sacraments	Date
1.		Baptism	Where
2.		Confirmation	
3.		Holy Communion	
Father's Name	Religion	Occupation	Date Entered
Mother's Name	Religion	Occupation	Grade
Guardian's Name	Religion	Occupation	Transferred to: Date
Check Marital Status	Normal ()	Rating of Home: Good ()	
Broken	Foster Home ()	Average () Poor ()	
Achievement Tests		Mental Ability Tests	
Name of Test	Form Date Tests G.S.	Name of Test Date	M.A. C.A. I.Q.
1.		1.	
2.		2.	
3.		3.	
4.		Date of Graduation	
5.		High School Entered	

THE REVERSE SIDE OF THE RECORD

Scholastic Record														Character Rating									
School Year	Grade	Religion	Arithmetic	Civics	English	General Science	Geography	History	Art	Music	Reading	Spelling	Promotion	Days Absent	Was Tardy	Grade	Obedience	Courtesy	Industry	Honesty	Self Control	Dependability	Teacher's Estimate
1 sem.																1							
2																2							
1																3							
2																4							
1																5							
2																6							
1																7							
2																8							
1																Special Abilities - Honors							
2																							
1																Out-of-School Activities - Hobbies							
2																							
1																Immunization							
2																Type							Date
1																							
2																							
Physical Disabilities - Hearing, Vision, etc.																Reasons for		Moved		()			
																Withdrawal:		Dissatisfaction		()			
																		Dismissed		()			

The second form, the 5 x 8" folder, contains all of the items on the first card and has, in addition, three distinguishing features. First, there is sufficient space provided to record the results of nine achievement tests as well as four tests of intelligence. This arrangement is more in accord with the accepted practice of giving educational tests more frequently. To quote but one authority on the subject, Bingham, in his book on Aptitudes and Aptitude Testing, writes:

Counselors are often asked to make well-informed inferences from test data as the highly desirable practice of maintaining cumulative records has spread from school to school. -- The value of cumulative records becomes obvious in those instances in which several test scores and other items--no one of which by itself could furnish a dependable indication of future accomplishment--nevertheless tend to confirm one another. The accumulation of measures counts.¹

Second, the folder also includes a more complete health record; most of the items can easily be checked by an observant teacher if the school does not have the services of a school nurse. When the child has normal health, the teacher need only record the results of health tests and the diseases the child has had. The former data will be given her by the school physician while the latter may easily be obtained from the mother when the child enters school. If a serious defect is noted, it is usually the teacher rather than a busy principal who is most interested in having it corrected. After this is done he places a "C" in the corrected column and records

¹ Bingham, Walter V. Aptitudes and Aptitude Testing. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1937, 390.

the date. As mentioned previously in this study, it is the knowledge gained from a glance at this part of the record that very often gives the key to both scholarship and behavior problems. Even though a separate health card may be kept by the school nurse in her office, the more important information should be transferred to the cumulative record where a teacher may have ready access to it at any time.

Third, the final improvement is related to the personality record. Since a description of types of behavior is considered by such authorities as Segel and Traxler, to be more reliable than a simple rating, the character traits used, although the same as on the first form, have been defined on a three-point scale. It is evident that in following this method teachers will find it possible to rate pupils more efficiently. In addition, if time permits, an anecdotal record of his observations which will substantiate the judgment made may be recorded on a separate card and placed inside the folder. Several writers believe that these observations are, perhaps, even more significant than the ratings themselves; but until the happy day arrives when Catholic teachers can have clerical assistance, it does not seem very practical to require an anecdotal record for each pupil.

In preparing the character rating scale the following provisions outlined by Tschechtelin have been observed:

1. Simple, clear, unambiguous description of behavior to be rated.
2. An opportunity for many judges to observe.
3. Increase in competence of judges through comparison and discussion of ratings.

4. Selection of traits found to be the more trustworthy, (and in this case the more important.)
5. Improvement of the scale, so that its units are more evident and more nearly equal.
6. Precautions against the "halo" effect (by having a number of judges rate the child.)²

Before asking teachers to use a scale of this type, the writer suggests a faculty discussion of the character traits listed. The principal may be asked to give information regarding a common interpretation of the terms or the amount of evidence necessary for a satisfactory judgment. Through these discussions and guided thinking, younger teachers will more quickly acquire skill in rating their pupils. During the first year they may also require additional instruction in how to study their pupils in order to be able to more readily infer character traits from the manner in which a child acts or behaves. They will soon realize how "individual traits serve as determining tendencies and as such may function as important motives in the learning situation."³

It is suggested in the literature that factors determining the rating be discussed with the pupils when they are mature enough to understand their meaning. The purpose of this is to make them character conscious by arousing their interest and by directing their

² Tschechtelin, S. M. Amatora, "Self-Appraisal of Children." Journal of Educational Research, xxxix, No. 1, September 1945, 26.

³ Ryans, David G., "Motivation in Learning." Forty-first Yearbook of the Nat'l Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, Ill., Public School Publishing Co., 1942, 311.

thinking along constructive lines. If a teacher follows the suggestion of the Catholic educator who writes: "Let the children know that they themselves are the architects in the building of their character, and we, only their advisers,"⁴ then they will put more effort into the development of a worthy character.

Since this goal, the formation of a noble character, is one of the primary objectives of Catholic education, the school administrators will make provision for the training of teachers and the instruction of children in this very important phase of education. Brother Stanislaus seems to summarize the proper motive when he says:

When education attempts to develop personality, it is undertaking a task that assumes proportions as grand and complex as human nature itself. The same completeness must characterize the means that our Catholic schools adopt to attain their objectives. Any disproportions between the completeness of the objectives of Catholic education and the means employed thereto cannot but be the cause of failure to achieve these same objectives, and this, as far as the students are concerned, leads to faulty adjustment and unsuccessful living.⁵

The use of the folder with these changes will, of course, be more time consuming, for there are more items to record and interpret. But a Catholic teacher sincerely interested in the welfare of each child, does not regret the additional expense or the time required to keep a

⁴ Peter, Brother S.C., "Some Tangibles in Character Training." National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin, xxxviii, No. 1, August 1942, 348.

⁵ Stanislaus, Brother E., "The Catholic School and Guidance." Journal of Religious Instruction, xvi, No. 3, Nov. 1945, 319.

more complete cumulative record. On the contrary, after experiencing what an aid the record is in helping pupils adjust themselves to their environment and what an essential instrument it is for more effective guidance, he will begin to include more data than is actually provided for in the present form.

This outcome is desirable, because it is not intended that the record as presented in this study will establish a definite form for Catholic schools. As research on the subject of cumulative records continues, more evidence as to what is most significant in a child's moral, physical, or social development will be revealed. In the light of this new evidence, the present cumulative record for Catholic schools will require revision.

A sample of the completed folder is presented below:

Catholic Elementary School					
Pupil Cumulative Record					
Surname	Christian Name	Middle Initial	Sex	School	
Date of Birth - Mo. - Day - Yr.		How verified	Place at Birth		School Address
Address	Telephone	Sacraments - Date		Where	
		Baptism			
		Holy Communion			
		Confirmation			
Father's Name	Birthplace	Religion		Occupation	
Mother's Maiden Name	Birthplace	Religion		Occupation	
Guardian	Birthplace	Religion		Occupation	
Check Marital Status		Rating of Home		No. of children	
Normal () Broken ()		Good () Average ()		B G	
Foster Home ()		Peer ()		() ()	

Achievement Test Record

Mental Ability Test Record
Name at Test

[illegible][illegible]

REVERSE SIDE OF THE FOLDER

Description of Personality Traits		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Health Record	
Obedience	Shows by attitude and action, desire to obey -									x = Defect C = Corrected	Date
	Usually obedient; respectful to authority -									Vision	
	Seldom obedient; slight respect for authority									Hearing	
Courtesy	Is exceptionally courteous and thoughtful									Tonsils	
	Is ordinarily polite and considerate									Adenoids	
	Rude, and inconsiderate to others									Teeth	
Industry	Works thoughtfully, carefully, independently									Speech	
	Achieves according to his ability									Lungs	
	Is careless, negligent; requires pressure									Thyroid	
Honesty	Irreproachable character; trustworthy									Nervous Dis.	
	Shows slight tendency toward dishonesty									Anemia	
	Tries frequently to deceive; insincere									Skin	
Self-Control	Well balanced; moderate at all times									Nutrition	
	Tends to be over-emotional - moderate control									Heart	
	Easily upset; outbursts of tears, anger; flighty									Orthopedic	
Dependability	Carries through what is undertaken; trustworthy									Ta Ht. Ea Wt.	
	Usually dependable if interested in work									Suspected T.B.	
	Fails to complete work even when guided									Posture	
Health Tests: Tuberculosis () Immunization () Vaccination ()											
Date											
Diseases Measles () Mumps () Chicken Pox ()											
Date											
Surname Whooping Cough () Scarlet Fever () Diphtheria ()											
Christian Name											

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The problem of this investigation was to construct a cumulative record for Catholic elementary schools. A summary of the procedures, the analysis, and the revision follows:

First, survey was made of the literature regarding the purposes that may be served by cumulative records and the criteria used in the selection of items. This study revealed the fact that cumulative records are now considered essential--

- a) To the school administrator in planning his work efficiently.
- b) To the teacher in guiding his pupils effectively.
- c) To the parents in obtaining a composite picture of their child's development.
- d) To the pupil in inciting him to work to his fullest capacity.

The criteria for the valid selection of items varied widely, but authorities seemed in agreement on these three factors:

- a) A good record includes items expressive of the school's objectives.
- b) The items should cover each school's particular needs.
- c) The record must be based on accurate measures and observations.

Second, an analysis was made of two hundred cumulative record forms used in public and diocesan school systems in forty-five states.

This analysis showed several interesting features and trends in the recent development of cumulative records.

1. The newer records stress personality and health ratings rather than estimates of scholarship.

2. An increasing amount of space is devoted to intelligence and achievement test data.

3. Items such as special abilities, out-of-school activities, etc., reflect an increasing interest in the development of the whole child.

4. The newer type of data does not seem to have been adopted for use in the records of most of the Catholic schools.

Third, a tentative list of items for a cumulative record was compiled on the basis of this analysis. The list was then submitted to one hundred fifty elementary principals of different types of schools in thirty-seven states. This represented an effort to discover which items they used at least occasionally.

Fourth, their suggestions for new items and their reactions to the rating scale for the items were used in the revision of the tentative list of items. Since several principals mentioned the inclusion of health data and more information about the home, these items were adopted.

Fifth, the revised list of items is included in the construction of the cumulative record in two forms: the 5 x 8" card, the choice of the principals consulted, and the 5 x 8" folder more completely in accord with present trends in the development of records.

On the basis of the research which indicated the valid criteria for the selection of items and the opinions of one hundred six principals in regard to the use of a cumulative record, a form for use in Catholic elementary schools has been described and presented in this study. The writer believes that a cumulative record of this type should prove both an efficient tool for the administration of Catholic schools and an effective instrument for guidance purposes in the hands of a Catholic teacher.

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SCHOOL SYSTEMS PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY

CUMULATIVE RECORDS RECEIVED FROM

ALABAMA

Birmingham
Montgomery

ARKANSAS

Conway
Fort Smith
Little Rock

ARIZONA

Tucson

CALIFORNIA

Fresno
Los Angeles
Oakland
Pasadena
Sacramento
San Diego
San Francisco
Santa Monica
San Rafael
San Pedro

COLORADO

Denver
Pueblo

CONNECTICUT

Bridgeport
Hartford
New Britain

DELAWARE

Wilmington

FLORIDA

Miami
St. Petersburg
Tampa

GEORGIA

Atlanta
Augusta
Savannah

IDAHO

Couer d'Alene

ILLINOIS

Belleville
Chicago
Cicero
East St. Louis
Oak Park
Peoria
Quincy
Rockford
Rock Island

INDIANA

Evansville
Fort Wayne
Gary
Hammond
Indianapolis
Michigan City

IOWA

Davenport
Des Moines
Dubuque
Fort Madison
Gilbertville
Waterloo

KANSAS

Kansas City
Topeka
Wichita
Xavier

KENTUCKY

Covington
Louisville

LOUISIANA

Crowley
Monroe
New Orleans

MARYLAND

Baltimore
Emmitsburg
Hagerstown
Roxbury

MASSACHUSETTS

Arlington
Boston
Medford
New Bedford
Quincy
Somerville
Springfield

MAINE

Portland

MICHIGAN

Detroit
Grand Rapids
Highland Park
Kalamazoo
Lansing
Marquette
Saginaw

MINNESOTA

Duluth
Mankato
Minneapolis
Minneota
St. Paul
Virginia
Wabasso
Winona

MISSISSIPPI

Chatawa
Natchez
University City

MISSOURI

Kansas City
St. Joseph
St. Louis
Springfield

MONTANA

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Billings
Helena
Miles City

NEBRASKA

Lincoln
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NEVADA

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Camden
Clifton
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OHIO

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Canton
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Cleveland
Dayton
Hamilton
Lakewood
Toledo
Warren
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OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City
Tulsa

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Pittsburgh
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OREGON

Portland
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RHODE ISLAND

Cranston
Providence

SOUTH CAROLINA

Charlestown
Columbia
Greenville
Spartanburg

SOUTH DAKOTA

Sioux Falls

TENNESSEE

Knoxville
Memphis
Nashville

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Seattle, Wash.

St. Cloud, Minn.

Springfield, Ill.

Springfield, Mass.

Tampa, Fla.

Toledo, Ohio

Wilmington, Del.

APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Sister M. Patricia, S.S.N.D. has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Education.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

January 18, 1947
Date

Justine Schmitt, S.J.
Signature of Adviser